

Treehouse Theater
LEVEL 2 Pre-Auditions Workshop

EXEC DIRECTOR INTRO

- Welcome / Introduce the Production Staff ~ each share their experience in/outside of THT
- WHY Theater and WHY Treehouse?
 - Opportunity to explore creativity and expression, as an individual and in a group
 - Learning life skills: making new friends; importance of teamwork, listening, and mutual respect; becoming more responsible, accountable, flexible; building self-confidence
 - Student leadership development program through production staff positions
 - Core principles of trust, respect, and having fun together
- Why do you want to be in this Treehouse musical? What's your favorite song in this musical?
- Directors ALWAYS look for:
 - Team Players -- listen and be supportive of fellow actors
 - Poise and Personality – be confident and relaxed
 - Good Diction and Projection -- speak loudly (but don't shout), clearly, and slowly enough to pronounce all sounds in each word
 - Expression – willingness to share feelings/emotions
 - Flexibility – open to trying new techniques/making changes, when asked
 - Dedication – commitment/availability for the show
- Auditioning is a life skill/experience like interviewing; it gets easier each time
 - Set a goal of earning a role, fully prepare ahead of time, and then give your best possible effort on audition day
 - Completion is a great accomplishment
- For reducing stress and anxiety, see techniques on last page
- We would love to work with every auditioning student, but cast sizes are limited to ensure a quality experience and appropriate stage-time opportunities
- Respect the Staff's experience and recognize that casting is difficult and subjective
- Auditions (Level 2)
 - Arrive 10 minutes early, check in, change clothes/shoes, warm up
 - We always start on time and end on time
 - Ages 6-8: 45-minute timeslot; focus is on expression, listening skills, following directions
 - Ages 9-18: 90-minute timeslot; split into two groups, separated by age; one group begins in music and one group begins with dancing / then the groups switch

PREPARE FOR AUDITIONS

DIRECTOR

Ages 6-8: nothing to prepare ahead of time

Ages 9-18: memorize a **MONOLOGUE** that is no longer than 1 minute long

- Research to find some **Options** that fit you
 - www.stageagent.com
 - www.backstage.com
- Select characters/roles to portray that are believable; maybe one spoken as a young person or a favorite character in a show
- Study and consider all of your options
 - Think about each character and the words being spoken; will you be convincing?
 - If you are a returning student, show effort; don't recite your lines from the previous show

- Practice your final selection, over and over, until fully memorized and ready to perform
 - Get to know your character, the setting, and the emotion he/she is feeling
 - Focus on healthy projection, diction, and voice inflection/interest
 - Before you begin, take a deep breath to relax and show yourself transforming into a character that is different from who you normally are
 - Stay “in character”
- Repeated practice leads to confidence

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Ages 6-18: memorize a **SONG** that is no longer than 1 minute long (usually a verse and a chorus)

- Research to find some **Options** that fit you
 - Should be from a musical, not a pop song from the radio
 - Should NOT be from the show you are auditioning for
 - Can be ANY part of the song (beginning, middle, or end); choose the part that best highlights your vocal range and best sounding notes
 - Choir teacher, piano, voice, or band teacher can help you find sheet music
- Accompaniment is **REQUIRED** – use/bring the music track (without the words sung by someone else, so staff can hear you)
 - CD - know the exact spot where you will start singing
 - MP3 file – played on our speakers through your smart phone or iPod
 - Search karaoke music track on YouTube by the song title
 - Use their free converter to make it into mp3 file
 - Download the file onto your electronic device to ensure playability at auditions
- Study and consider all of your options
 - How does each showcase your vocal range (how high/low you can sing WELL)
 - Think about each character and the words being sung; will you be convincing?
 - Returning students, ages 9-18, be sure to show effort; don't sing your song from the previous show
- Practice your final selection, over and over, until fully memorized and ready to perform
 - Get to know your song, the character, and the emotions he/she is feeling
 - Focus on projection, diction, and dynamics
 - Before you begin, take a deep breath to relax and show yourself transforming into a character that is different from who you normally are
 - Stay “in character”
- Repeated practice leads to confidence

CHOREOGRAPHER

What to wear

- Dress nicely in something comfortable for moving in that makes you feel good – no jeans, skirts, or dresses
- Don't wear a costume, excessive make-up, or a fancy hairstyle
- Pull hair back so we can see your face, even if you bend over

Prepare your bag

- Water bottled, labeled with your name
- Bring shoes to change into (due to wet/sloppy weather conditions) - jazz shoes, ballet shoes, tennis shoes, soft-sole shoes
 - For your own safety, no bare feet, socks, or flip flops

AT AUDITIONS -- TIME TO SHINE !

DIRECTOR

Looks for good preparation, voice inflection/emotion/projection, and willingness to take instruction

- Walk in with confidence, good posture, and positive body language
- Be friendly, respectful and polite - SMILE
- Be kind and supportive of others auditioning
- Do NOT talk while anyone else is talking or singing
- Listen to directions from Staff so they don't need to repeat themselves
- Raise your hand to ask questions only *if you really don't understand*
- Each student is expected to introduce themselves, the **monologue** title, the source or show title, and some background on the character
- Take a deep breath, pause, and focus to getting into character
- If you make a mistake, just keep going ~ it's likely they won't even notice
- If the Director asks you to "cold read" a scene with other actors, do not hide your face behind/in the script. Try to have some fun with other actors. Make specific, personal, bold choices.

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Looks for good preparation, vocal range, projection, tone and willingness to try suggestions

- Each student is expected to introduce themselves, the **song** title, the related show, and some background on the character
- Take a deep breath, pause, and focus on getting into character

CHOREOGRAPHER

Looks for positive attitudes while taking instruction and overall willingness to try new things

- All roles require simple movements, but previous dance lessons or training is not required
- Some roles require more dancing abilities
- Stay positive and try your best to learn the new steps
- Try to hide any frustration by keeping a smile on your face
- Don't hide behind other people or look at the floor all the time

AFTER AUDITIONS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Call Backs, usually the day after the final audition date
 - Watch for an email from info@treehousetheater.com
 - Mainly used for considering rolls with speaking lines and/or vocal solos
 - Not everyone is needed, so don't assume anything if you're not asked to come in
- While waiting for the Cast List, be patient, relax, and celebrate the completion of your audition
- Cast List (alphabetical, by last name) – when/where this is published
- RESPECT the Director's decisions; knowing that it was a very difficult process!
 - Director's job is to cast while considering the BIG picture for the WHOLE production
 - **Students are placed in roles that best fit each Director's vision**
 - You/your child may be too young/old/tall/short/big/little for their "dream" role
 - Teaching "Real life:" not every student can get the role they wanted
- Students who are named as cast members are expected to embrace their role(s), be supportive of others, and not complain to others or on social media

QUESTIONS?

RESOURCE PAGE

TECHNIQUES FOR REDUCING Anxiety and Nervousness

For Parents

- Respect and validate your child's feelings
- Help your child to brainstorm ways to cope with the situation, rather than just giving solutions; help him/her feel empowered
- Encourage your child's attempts to be brave, no matter how small they may seem to you. Use labeled praise such as "I'm so proud of you for auditioning!"

For Students

While Preparing and Rehearsing for Auditions

- Self-talk -- record in a notebook both the positive and negative thoughts you have about the audition process. Thoughts that make you anxious or nervous would be considered negative whereas thoughts that are positive make your worries go down. Try to record more positive than negative.
- Bubble breathe -- breathe through your nose, feel your stomach rises on the inhale and then lower on the exhale through your mouth, using your abdomen
- Take a break -- get a glass of water, watch TV, splash some water on your face, go for a jog or walk. Think about something else so you can cool down and relax.
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) is a way to reduce anxiety in your body by systematically tensing and relaxing muscles. Great videos below show PMR - the first link is geared toward younger children whereas the second is for older children. The third link is for mind relaxation, to help with racing thoughts or worry.
 - <http://www.cleanvideosearch.com/media/action/yt/watch?v=aaTDNYjk-Gw>
 - <http://www.cleanvideosearch.com/media/action/yt/watch?v=cFFCHE-E4-A>
 - <http://www.cleanvideosearch.com/media/action/yt/watch?v=smzg-E6gBYc>

Before Auditions and/or Performances

- Relax your body with breathing exercises and PMR
- Focus on yourself and not other students
- Think positive!!!
- Exercise or do something fun to burn off extra energy
- Get a good night's sleep
- Practice, practice, practice so you will feel well prepared

DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT Post-Auditions or after the Cast List is released

- Not every role name will be fully understandable to actors; trust that the role is right for you
- Research your assigned role(s) and try to get interested/excited
- If disappointed, allow yourself/your child to be sad, but set a one-hour time limit
- If you/your child is not cast it is NOT because he/she did something wrong!
- Eventually, think back to your Audition:
 - Celebrate the parts that you felt great about, identifying your strengths
 - Think about possible ways to improve for next time; make an Action plan